

PAS refuses to settle suit with Najib over article on stepson

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PAS will not settle a defamation suit filed by Najib Abdul Razak against the party's mouthpiece *Harakah* over a report on the prime minister's stepson Riza Aziz, which was based on an article published in the *New York Times* last year.

Speaking to *Malaysiakini*, PAS' lawyer Wan Rohimi Wan Daud said the matter would go to trial.

"We have already informed Najib's lawyer regarding this (the decision).

"Case management for the matter has been rescheduled for Dec 1 before Court of Appeal president Justice Md Raus Sharif," Wan Rohimi added.

On July 26, it was reported that during a case management proceeding then, PAS was not prepared to accept a proposed settlement on the matter.

In his suit filed on March 18 last year, Najib named *Harakah* managing director Rosli Yaakop and *Harakahdaily* chief editor Taufek Yahya as defendants.

In his statement of claim, the prime minister said the article portrayed him as having misused 1MDB funds and that the publication of the article was intended to tarnish his reputation.

Two appeals by Najib pending

Previously, it was reported that Najib had two appeals before the Court of Appeal in relation to this case, namely amending his statement of claim to insert the statement by attorney-general Mohamed Apandi Ali that he had been cleared of any wrongdoing regarding 1MDB and the application to go trial without calling witnesses, including himself.

Both applications were dismissed by Kuala Lumpur High Court judge Justice Hue Siew Kheng, resulting in the pending appeals before the appellate court.

Najib and *Harakah*'s proposal to settle the suit out of court was first revealed on June 21.

Besides this suit, Najib has five other ongoing suits, namely against *Malaysiakini*, PKR vice-president Rafizi Ramli, DAP national publicity secretary Tony Pua, and former MCA president and ex-transport minister Dr Ling Liong Sik.

However, Najib has settled his defamation suit with Taiping MP Nga Kor Ming of DAP.

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